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3 December 1947 Civic League of Business Women
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Adm. Hillenkoetter - 1947

Madam Chairman, Governor Donnelly, Mayor Kaufman, distinguished
guests, members of the Civic League:

I have come to St. Louis tonight to enjoy being with
all of you, and not to inflict a lengthy speech upon you. On
every side I have heard so much of the prospects for the dance
that I am under the strictest orders from my wife to do nothing
which might in any way delay all of us from the festivities. I
would be most ungrateful indeed, however, if I did not take this
opportunity, both on behalf of Mrs. Hillenkoetter and myself, to
thank you most sincerely for the wonderful reception and entertain-
ment you have given us.

There comes to me all too seldom these days the privilege
of returning to St. Louis. I still look upon it as my home. The
many years I spent in school here -- first at Blair, and then at
Yeatman High -- have always meant a lot to me, and I have never for-
gotten them no matter how far from St. Louis my duties have taken me.
It is only natural that one's boyhood days should be indelibly en-

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graved on one's mind. But, Mayor Kaufman, the fact that the city of my birth should not have forgotten me, and has been willing to invite me to sit on the platform with so many of its distinguished citizens tonight, fills me with a great feeling of humility. It can only be with that feeling, also, that one can approach the tremendous task which the President has assigned me as Director of Central Intelligence.

Of course, there is little that one can say in public regarding the Central Intelligence Agency because of the nature of its work and the restrictions of security. However, I would like to tell you a little of the background of the Central Intelligence Agency. I would say first that American intelligence, prior to the Second World War, was in a somewhat chaotic condition. Perhaps the primary factors causing that condition were a lack of coordination among the several intelligence agencies of the Armed Services and other government agencies, and also a failure to realize that, by and large, intelligence is the product of painstaking and detailed

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research into available information on all foreign countries and areas in the world. There is a tremendous proportion of this material available in books, newspapers, periodicals, and other public media of expression within the government and on the shelves of libraries all over the country. It is just a question of digging it out, evaluating it, and putting it together. The product then must be disseminated to those appropriate agencies within the government which have need for it. By and large, there is no sleight-of-hand connected with intelligence -- it is just hard, painstaking work.

With the advent of the war, temporary and stopgap measures were adopted in the field of intelligence to see us through. One such measure was the Office of Strategic Services which did such a magnificent job under General Donovan. Another measure was the hurried expansion of the Intelligence Divisions of the Army, Navy, and Air Forces, the Board of Economic Warfare, and later its successor, the Foreign Economic Administration, both of which were new government agencies, and therefore, new to the field of intelligence.

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Those who dealt with intelligence during the war realized that the security of the United States made it mandatory that the chaotic condition which existed before the war, and the extreme duplications, both in functions and personnel, which existed during the war must not happen again. To that end, on the 22nd of January 1946, by Executive Directive, President Truman created the National Intelligence Authority -- consisting of the Secretaries of State, War, and the Navy, and his personal representative, Fleet Admiral William D. Leahy.

Under the National Intelligence Authority, and serving as its working echelon, the President created the Central Intelligence Group, whose function it was to coordinate the foreign intelligence activities of the United States as they relate to the national security. The functions of the Central Intelligence Group included the correlation and evaluation of intelligence relating to the national security and its appropriate dissemination within the government. Above all, it is our duty to avoid, within the in-

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telligence agencies of the Government -- Army, Navy, Air, State, and the others -- the continual overlapping of functions, duplication of effort, and interagency competition both for facts and personnel, which have been the downfall of so many intelligence services in other countries in the past.

As the first Director of Central Intelligence, President Truman selected a most worthy son of Missouri, Rear Admiral Sidney W. Souers. Admiral Souers had been anxious to return to the civilian life from which the national emergency had called him. However, he readily acceded to the President's request that he remain on duty in order to establish the Central Intelligence Group, and to this end to put to work his great talents for organization and administration. This he did with outstanding success, retiring finally in June 1946, only to be recalled to Washington again this year, first to serve the President in certain matters concerning the Atomic Energy Commission, and finally to serve as the first Executive Secretary of the National Security Council established

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under the National Security Act of 1947. The National Security Council thus established consists of the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretaries of the Army, the Navy, and the Air Force, and the Chairman of the newly established National Security Resources Board. It is the duty of this Council to advise and make recommendations to the President in those broad areas where the policies of the State Department and the Military Establishment come together, and to integrate, as has never been done before, the foreign, domestic, and military policies and commitments of the United States as they relate to the national security. Directly under this Council there has been created the Central Intelligence Agency, and all the personnel and functions of the Central Intelligence Group have been transferred to this new Agency, which I have the honor of heading.

There is one more point which I wish to make concerning Central Intelligence. During the period in which we operated under Executive Order, and in the debates, both in the press and in the Congress, which preceded our establishment under the National

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Security Act of 1947, we were the subject of some unthinking attacks. (Might I add here, parenthetically, that no newspaper was more helpful in coming to our defense than the Post - Dispatch, and to them I wish to express my gratitude for their editorial help in creating public understanding of our work.) Nothing could be more unfair to us or do more to muddy the public reaction as to our real duties than the attempts which were made by some to label us as an incipient Gestapo. Therefore, let me lay this ghost once and for all by pointing out, in the first place, that the law specifically provides -- and I quote -- that the Central Intelligence Agency "shall have no police, subpoena, law enforcement powers or internal security functions." Internal security is the function of the FBI. The functions of the Central Intelligence Agency are the foreign intelligence activities of the United States. Central Intelligence does not have, and does not want any internal domestic functions, and under the law we cannot assert them. The history of Ogpus, of NKVDs and of Gestapos will show that they can only arise when the intelligence functions and the police powers are blended together

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in one organization. That cannot happen and will not happen here.

It might be well to think of our Agency as a battery of searchlights peering out to sea -- trying to pierce the fog which surrounds the other countries and areas of the world. The product we produce should be considered as a giant jig-saw puzzle, into which we are continually trying to fit the pieces.

In the letter which came to me from the Spotlight Dinner Committee, the Secretary asked if I could not also say something about the battleship Missouri. That is like asking someone to talk about his best girl. And, because you can never stop someone from talking about his best girl, I happily will say a few words about the greatest of all battleships, named after our native state.

It is with great pleasure that I have noted the editorial comment which has appeared over the past year in the Post-Dispatch. For its support of the principle that the United States should have a strong intelligence service, we are extremely grateful. In calling for statutory authority for the Central Intelligence Group and an independent budget, they have echoed the hopes of my predecessors, Admiral Souers and General Vandenberg, and myself. These hopes have culminated in the Central Intelligence Agency section of the National Security Act of 1947.

The Post-Dispatch has also been critical at times, terming the Central Intelligence Agency "essentially a coordinating organization ... a makeshift, a facade with nothing behind it." They have thought of it as "a paper Agency of 'coordination', dependent for its intelligence upon the voluntary proffer of the intelligence

organizations of Army, Navy, Air and State Department.*

Were these charges correct, the criticism would be justified. It is true, ~~moreover~~, that the Central Intelligence Agency does act as a coordinating Agency for all of the foreign intelligence activities of the United States. But what this coordination means is, as General Vandenberg stated before the House Committee on Executive Expenditures last spring, that "by the assignment of primary fields of intelligence responsibilities, we are -- in the fields of collection, production and dissemination -- preventing overlapping functions -- that is, eliminating duplicate roles and missions, and eliminating duplicate services in carrying out these functions."

The coordinated plans and programs which we have put into effect in the realm of departmental intelligence functions give prospect for orderly operations and the elimination of wasteful duplication. If I may quote General Vandenberg's testimony again, I think it is

pertinent to note that "when every intelligence agency knows exactly what is expected of it in relation to its departmental mission and to the national intelligence mission, and when it can count, as the result of firm agreement, on being supplied with what it needs from other fields, each agency can concentrate on its own primary field, and do that superior job which world conditions require."

The Central Intelligence Agency now has the statutory authority to enforce these coordinated intelligence programs, and I believe that that is the authority which thinking people have felt and stated we should have. We plan to exercise it to the very best of our abilities, so that this country will never have to face unprepared a Pearl Harbor in an atomic age.